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August 8 - August 14, 1991

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USDA SCIENTISTS GEAR UP RESEARCH OF PATENTED CANCER TECHNOLOGY

WASHINGTON, Aug. 8—U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists have begun fine-tuning their technique to produce the cancer-fighting drug taxol through tissue culture.

Currently the only source of taxol is the bark of the Pacific yew tree. But, an alternate taxol source was developed at USDA's Agricultural Research Service by inventors Donna Gibson, Alice Christen and John Bland.

Cells from yew bark are grown in a special laboratory culture, or "soup," to produce taxol on an experimental basis, Gibson said.

She is looking at taxol production within the entire Pacific yew tree, rather than only its bark, to determine which section of the tree is the best producer of the cancer-fighting drug.

"Once we determine the optimum conditions for production of the taxol-producing cells, it will give us clues on how to set up a fermentation process for commercial operations—similar to growing bacteria to make penicillin," she said.

Gibson's taxol research started at the ARS Southern Regional Research Center in New Orleans but moved last year to the agency's Plant Protection Research Unit in Ithaca, N.Y.

ARS obtained a patent May 28 from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on producing taxol and taxol-like compounds in tissue culture, rather than from the yew's bark.

Phyton Catalytic Inc. of Ithaca has been granted an exclusive license to the ARS patent, said Ann Whitehead, the agency's patent coordinator in Beltsville, Md.

Congress passed the Stevenson-Wydler Act in 1981 to give federal agencies the right to grant exclusive licenses, Whitehead said, as an incentive to invest in the development and commercialization of federal research findings.

ARS published a public notice of intent to exclusively license the technology in the Aug. 21, 1990 Federal Register. Prior to the official

notification, the agency marketed the taxol process through a variety of technology transfer steps.

Although numerous companies expressed interest in the technology, only three companies applied for a license. However, one of those companies withdrew its application, while a second was interested in the technology for research purposes only.

Phyton Catalytic was the only company to submit a detailed business plan to commercialize the research. A business plan is one element required in the 1981 law passed by Congress that allows the government to grant exclusive licenses to private industry.

ARS reviewed Phyton Catalytic's license application and determined that the Ithaca-based company's proposed plan would best serve the public in commercializing the taxol research.

The National Cancer Institute has described taxol as "one of the most important cancer drugs discovered in the past decade." Preliminary results suggest a success rate of up to 35 percent in treating ovarian cancer.

"The drug companies we have talked to are very interested in our method," Gibson said. "They like it from an economical standpoint, because you don't have to grow a tree."

It takes 20,000 pounds of bark—2,000 to 4,000 trees—to produce approximately one kilogram, or 2.2 pounds, of the drug.

ARS is cooperating with the National Institutes of Health, various universities and private industry on the development of new yew cell lines, including embryo, root and hairy root cultures, said Gibson.

Along with Ray Ketchum, a post-doctorate researcher at the Ithaca lab, Gibson will carry out research on new cell lines. Gibson said embryo cultures carry the genetic information of the Pacific yew. Hairy root cultures tend to grow fast and produce more secondary compounds such as taxol, while root cultures tend to be very stable, she said.

"There has been virtually no work on the genetics of taxol production," Gibson said. "This research will give us clues on what cell lines are high producers of taxol."

A California company recently announced that it had developed a way to produce taxol through tissue culture. And, researchers at the University of Florida have developed an unrelated way to produce taxol from the yew's needles, rather than its bark.

Bruce Kinzel (301) 344-2739

#

FLAVOR COMPOUNDS IN PLANTS BLOCK POTATO SPROUTING

WASHINGTON, Aug. 9—Natural compounds from spices such as cinnamon will stop potatoes from sprouting, U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists have found.

Such sprouting inhibitors could prevent millions of dollars of potatoes from going to waste before reaching the dinner table.

“When potatoes begin to sprout, all sorts of things happen,” said plant physiologist Steven F. Vaughn of USDA’s Agricultural Research Service.

The sprouting tubers soften and lose weight, leading to spoilage, Vaughn said. Also, the potatoes change much of their starch into sugars. A high sugar content makes french fries and potato chips turn an unattractive brown color when cooked.

One of the sprouting inhibitors is benzaldehyde, used to give cola drinks a cherry-type flavor, he said. Chemical companies produce benzaldehyde synthetically, but it is naturally present in cinnamon as well as cherries and almonds.

Vaughn and co-inventors Gayland F. Spencer and Richard G. Powell at the ARS National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research in Peoria, Ill., have applied for two patents on use of the natural compounds as sprouting inhibitors.

One patent application covers a group of biodegradable compounds found in major flavor components of plants such as almonds, cinnamon, cumin and thyme.

These compounds—called aromatic aldehydes and alcohols—keep potatoes permanently dormant, apparently by killing the meristem, an area of the potato where cells divide to form roots and stems, Vaughn said. Treated tubers keep on living, but turn starch into sugars at a lower than normal rate. Compounds called monoterpenes, covered under the other patent application, are major flavor components of oils from plants such as eucalyptus and peppermint and are commonly found in flavorings and perfumes. According to Vaughn, ancient Incas in South America stored potatoes in pits layered with soil and leaves of plants from the mint family which contain oils high in monoterpenes.

Monoterpenes, which do not kill potatoes’ meristems, might be used to maintain seed potatoes in a dormant “Rip Van Winkle” state until just prior to spring planting, he said.

At least one company is seeking licenses to produce and market the new sprouting inhibitors, Vaughn said.

Many of the compounds are food, drug and cosmetic ingredients classified by the Food and Drug Administration as “generally recognized as safe.” FDA approval for use of the compounds as sprouting inhibitors would be needed, said Vaughn.

Studies show that, when preparing the potatoes for serving, lingering traces of the compounds are washed away or removed by cooking, leaving no unusual flavors.

The compounds could become replacements for a synthetic chemical known as CIPC, relied upon for more than three decades to inhibit potato sprouting, said Vaughn.

In addition to preventing tubers from sprouting, the natural compounds kill the fungus *Fusarium sambucinum*, which causes tuber dry rot, a storage disease. Recently, several strains of the fungus have developed resistance to the fungicide thiabendazole now used for disease control. Vaughn found that both groups of natural sprouting inhibitors killed resistant fungal strains.

Selection of a particular compound to inhibit potato sprouting in commercial storage probably will depend on the compound’s cost and how economically it can be applied, said Vaughn.

Ben Hardin (309) 685-4011

#

MADIGAN NAMES THREE MEMBERS TO FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE BOARD

WASHINGTON, Aug. 9—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced three new appointments and one reappointment to the six-member Board of Directors of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation in Washington.

Appointed to the board are L. Charles Mulholland, Coral, Mich.; Aram Kinosian, Tulare, Calif.; and Hal Manders, Dallas Center, Iowa. All three are farmers.

Reappointed to the board is Richard G. Muncie, Sun City West, Ariz. Muncie, a retired crop insurance executive, was first appointed in 1986.

By law, the FCIC Board of Directors consists of six individuals: three active farmers, one person experienced in the crop insurance business,

the under secretary of agriculture for small community and rural development (currently Roland R. Vautour) and the FCIC manager (currently James E. Cason).

Private sector board members are appointed by the secretary of agriculture and serve at his discretion.

The board of directors is responsible for the management of the \$1.4-billion federal crop insurance program. FCIC provides crop insurance on more than 96 million acres of crops in all 50 states.

Cliff Lorick (202) 382-9822

#

USDA ANNOUNCES HACCP WORKSHOP ON POULTRY SLAUGHTER

WASHINGTON, Aug. 9—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service will hold a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) workshop for poultry slaughter operations Aug. 27-29, at the Atlanta Ritz-Carlton, 181 Peachtree St., Atlanta, Ga.

“This is the first HACCP workshop for slaughter operations, and it will focus on developing a generic HACCP model for poultry slaughter,” said FSIS Administrator Lester M. Crawford.

The HACCP system is a specialized method for identifying and preventing hazards during food production to ensure public health protection.

Crawford said the model developed at the workshop will be tested in volunteer plants. Plants wishing to take part in the HACCP test have until Sept. 6 to volunteer.

The poultry slaughter workshop is the third in a series of five workshops. The first developed a model for refrigerated foods. The second developed a model for cooked sausage products. The fourth and fifth workshops are tentatively scheduled for fresh ground beef in December 1991 and swine slaughter in March 1992. Specific sites and locations will be announced later.

The poultry slaughter workshop already has booked its maximum number of participants. The meeting is open to the public and those wishing to observe may make written requests by Aug. 21 to Dr. Wallace I. Leary, Director, HACCP Special Team, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Room 0114-S., USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

For additional information on the HACCP study, contact Leary at the same address, or telephone (202) 245-5087.

FSIS and its 9,000 employees are dedicated to ensuring that meat and poultry products are safe, wholesome and accurately labeled.

Jim Greene (202) 382-0314

#

USDA PROPOSES TO DISALLOW HOT WATER TREATMENT FOR HAWAIIAN PAPAYAS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 12—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to disallow the “double hot-water dip” as an approved quarantine treatment for Hawaiian papayas.

“The hot water treatment is effective when properly done, but it is too complex to be practical,” said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

“It is particularly difficult to enforce the requirement that no more than 18 hours may elapse between picking and treating the fruit. On two occasions, fruit fly larvae were discovered in treated papayas, possibly due to insufficient monitoring of each step of the process,” Glosser said.

The high-temperature, forced-air treatment approved for papayas in 1989 works well and is a good alternative to the hot-water treatment. Other approved treatments also are available, he said.

Treatment is required because Hawaii is infested with fruit and vegetable pests not present on the mainland. Chief among these pests are three species of exotic fruit flies—Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly), melon fly and Oriental fruit fly.

Unless fruit is commercially treated to kill pest larvae, it may not be moved from Hawaii to the mainland. Glosser said APHIS currently is conducting a campaign to alert Hawaiian residents and visitors that they may not mail or carry fruit to the mainland because those items could be carrying agricultural pests.

Notice of the proposed rule change will be published in the Aug. 13 Federal Register. Comments will be accepted if they are received on or before Sept. 12. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket 91-077 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD-APHIS-USDA, Rm. 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, MD 20782. Comments may be inspected at

USDA, Rm. 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Ave., S.W.,
Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through
Friday, except holidays.

Carce Vander Linden (301) 436-7799

#

MOUNTAIN-CLIMBER'S MOTH FROM ITALY COULD STEP ON U.S. WEED

WASHINGTON, Aug. 12—A moth found near Rome, Italy, by a mountain-climbing U.S. Department of Agriculture entomologist may be a new scourge for leafy spurge, a weed pest in 37 states and southern Canada.

“Our ‘mountain moth’ looks like a good candidate as a biocontrol agent for leafy spurge, but we need to conduct rigorous tests to find out how good,” said Massimo Cristofaro of USDA’s Agricultural Research Service. He’s based at the ARS Biological Control of Weeds Laboratory in Rome.

Leafy spurge, native to Eurasia, invaded the U.S. in the 1800s and infests about five million acres of rangeland, he noted. Cattle won’t eat it, and its extensive roots rob water from desirable grazing plants. People who handle the weed can get blisters, rashes and eye irritations.

In preliminary trials, Cristofaro said, the moth’s larvae dined readily on potted leafy spurge plants from the United States. But he plans extensive 3- to 5-year-long tests to check the moth’s feeding preferences and study its biology. That means collecting larvae, eggs and pupae and obtaining fertile eggs from lab-reared adults. Then, if the moths pass muster, the Rome lab will ship some to ARS scientists in the United States for further study and potential release in pilot tests against the weed.

Cristofaro found the moth last December while honing his mountaineering skills in the off-season. He has been climbing for sport—and conducting research with the agency—for 10 years.

“During winter,” he said, “I keep up my climbing skills with brief but difficult climbs not far from the city.” On Dec. 15, he and a friend were climbing near Supino, a village 60 miles southeast of Rome.

Part way up a 300-foot cliff, he recalled, “I was about to tie a knot on my rope when I saw damage to the stem of an ugly weed.” The weed was a relative of leafy spurge that’s known as *Euphorbia characias*. “I

called out to my friend and asked him to wait a minute—he well understands my sickness for bugs and beetles. Then I opened the plant's stem and found a moth larva feeding inside.”

In an earlier trip to Supino, he'd seen flea beetles attacking the same plant. “We sacrificed our mineral water so we could put some of the flea beetles into the bottle,” he said.

But he was more intrigued by the moth larva. “A long-horned beetle is the only other insect known to bore into the stems of leafy spurge,” he explained. “Plus, this moth larva was quite large despite it being the ‘wrong’ season. It was a very cold winter and there was snow all around.”

A few days later, a search of the area turned up more larvae. Cristofaro took them back to his lab, successfully rearing a few to adulthood. Recently, the ARS Systematic Entomology Lab in Beltsville, Md., identified the insect as *Nephoterix divisella*, a pyralid moth known to breed several generations a year.

Since the 1960's, the Rome lab has discovered, studied and shipped to the United States several beetle, fly and moth species in efforts to rein in the weed. “Ideally, you have a team of insects that together attack the entire plant—seeds, roots, stems, leaves and flowers,” Cristofaro said.

“This new moth may find a niche of its own,” said ARS research entomologist Norman Rees. He tests anti-spurge insects at the ARS Rangeland Weeds Laboratory in Bozeman, Mont.

With any biocontrol insect, he noted, the question always is whether it can thrive in an area's unique mix of climate, soil and other factors. Even seemingly minor factors, such as the soil's amount of organic matter, can affect an insect, he said.

Jim De Quattro (301) 344-3648

#

USDA AMENDS POTATO RESEARCH AND PROMOTION PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Aug. 13—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is amending the national Potato Research and Promotion Plan to add Alaska and Hawaii to the states covered by the program, and to reflect certain provisions in the 1990 Farm Bill.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the amendments will:

- assess imported potatoes, potato products and seed potatoes at rates levied on domestic potatoes;
- include up to five importers on the National Potato Promotion Board, the program's administrative body; and
- eliminate assessment refund provisions in the plan.

Haley said these amendments, except for adding Alaska and Hawaii to the plan, will be put to a referendum of producers and importers between Aug. 19 and Sept. 6.

Beginning Aug. 14, 10 percent of the assessments collected from domestic producers and from importers of potatoes will be escrowed. If the referendum supports the amendments, the escrowed funds will revert to the Potato Board. Otherwise, the money will fund producer and importer requests for refunds.

Details of the amendments and the referendum will appear as a final rule in the Aug. 14 Federal Register. Copies and additional information are available from Arthur L. Pease, AMS, USDA, Fruit and Vegetable Division, Marketing Order Administration Branch, rm. 2525-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456, tel. (202) 475-3915.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

#

USDA PROPOSES TO ALLOW BROADER USE OF CUSTOM-MADE ANIMAL BIOLOGICS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 14—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is reproposing rules that would let autogenous, or custom-made, animal biologics be used in some non-emergency situations.

Autogenous biologics are products derived from disease organisms that

are taken from sick or dead animals. The organisms are inactivated and injected into healthy animals for disease protection.

“There is a need for autogenous products to fill the gap where regularly licensed products are not available,” said Terry L. Medley, director for Biotechnology, Biologics, and Environmental Protection in USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

“Based on comments received from the public, APHIS has modified the rules for producing and using autogenous biologics originally proposed in April 1990,” Medley said. Comments were received in writing and orally at a public meeting held in Ames, Iowa, in August 1990.

In addition to the provisions affecting non-emergency situations, the reproposal would:

- Specify how to apply for a request to use autogenous biologics in herds other than the herd of origin;

- Specify conditions permitting production of an autogenous biologic for more than one production run;

- Specify conditions permitting production of an autogenous biologic for longer than 12 months;

- Clarify that autogenous biologics may be prepared and administered only by or under the direction of a veterinarian on behalf of the client, under a veterinary-client-patient relationship.

The repropose rule is published in the Aug. 13 Federal Register and will be discussed at a meeting on veterinary biologics sponsored by APHIS on Aug. 15-16 in Ames, Iowa.

Written comments will be accepted if they are received on or before Oct. 15. An original and three copies of written comments referring to Docket 90-146 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD-APHIS-USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, MD 20782. Comments may be inspected at USDA, Rm 1141-S, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222

#

USDA ANNOUNCES FINAL RULES FOR PEANUT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Aug. 14—Final rules of the peanut program for the 1991 -1995 crops of peanuts were announced today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service. The rules carry out the peanut program provisions of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990.

The interim rules' published in the Federal Register on April 19, were adopted with the following changes:

—“Considered produced” credit will not be granted for a peanut poundage quota that is transferred to another farm under a “fall transfer” provision.

—The basis for determining quota priority counties in Texas has been changed so that the county's quota comparison for 1989 will be made using basic quota rather than effective quota. As a result, Bailey and Hidalgo Counties have been added to the list of eligible counties. The final rule provides that eligible farms may, if they had a 1990 quota, retain their eligibility after a farm reconstitution if the new farm does not include any part of a farm that did not meet this requirement.

—Loan pool profits in either the bright hull pool or the dark hull pool for Valencia peanuts produced in New Mexico will not be used to offset any losses other than losses for New Mexico Valencia peanuts of the same hull category. Also, profits in other loan pools will not be used to offset losses in any loan pool for Valencia peanuts produced in New Mexico.

—For contracts between producers and handlers for the purchase of 1991-crop additional peanuts for exporting or crushing, the contract may be filed on a form other than the standard form prescribed by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation. However, in order for the contract to be approved by the county ASC committee, the contract must contain the elements prescribed by the peanut regulations.

The final rule for the 1991 crop says that CCC will not require producers to satisfy the producer's contracts for additional peanuts before making peanuts available for use as “buybacks.” The rule also maintains the prohibition against the granting of export credit for peanut products made from contract additional peanuts and exported to Canada or Mexico. However, further public comment will be solicited on these provisions for the 1992 through 1995 crops at a later date.

The final rule appeared in the Aug. 13 Federal Register.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-8206.

#

COCKROACH BAIT INVENTED BY USDA SCIENTISTS LICENSED BY PRIVATE FIRM

WASHINGTON, Aug. 14—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has granted a license to Air Vent Inc. of Peoria, Ill. for a new, environmentally sound bait which uses corn mash to lure at least 15 species of cockroaches to their death.

Known as the "Insect Control System," the bait was developed by USDA scientists and is patented by USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

In laboratory studies, the bait has also proven to be attractive to other insect pests, said co-inventor Richard J. Brenner of ARS' Medical and Veterinary Entomology Research Laboratory in Gainesville, Fla.

"This bait is environmentally sound because the only significant release of toxicant occurs in the gut of the cockroach," Brenner said. A slow-release insecticide in the bait kills a cockroach within one hour after ingestion.

When ambient temperatures rise, a cockroach's metabolism increases, making the pest hungry and thirsty.

"The bait has several key ingredients that allow a release of aromatic attractants, while maintaining a high moisture level," he said. The bait mixture tends to retain its moisture despite drying conditions and the attractants draw cockroaches to the bait, Brenner said.

Even with dry food and water available, Brenner found that cockroaches are more attracted to the new bait.

Mike Daniels, national sales manager for Air Vent, said the bait should be available to the public through the professional pest control market in late 1993 or early 1994. The company has exclusive rights to the new bait.

The Environmental Protection Agency must approve the bait before it can be sold.

Bruce Kinzel (301) 344-2739

#

USDA ANNOUNCES FINAL RESULTS OF 1991 PROGRAM SIGNUP

WASHINGTON, Aug. 14—A report issued today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation shows that producers have signed contracts to enroll 169.4 million acres of feed grains, wheat, upland and extra-long staple (ELS) cotton and rice in the 1991 commodity acreage reduction programs. Enrolled acreage in this final report is up slightly (1.9 million acres) from the preliminary program signup data announced May 13.

Under the contracts 17.1 million acres will be designated as Acreage Conservation Reserve. Also, 11.7 million acres are intended to be idled under the 0/92 and 50/92 provisions of these programs and 0.5 million acres will be planted to minor oilseeds under the 0/92 provisions.

The acreage enrolled in 1991 commodity programs represents 79.3 percent of the 213.5 million acres of total crop acreage bases established for these commodities. For the 1990 programs, 78 percent of total crop acreage bases was enrolled with 26 million acres devoted to conserving uses, compared to 28.8 million this year.

Table follows on next page.

NATIONAL SUMMARY OF THE 1991 ENROLLMENT REPORT

Crop	Effec- tive Base	En- rolled Base	Per- cent ¹ En- rolled	ACR ^{10,50/92}			Total	Net Flexed Acres ²
				Idled	Pltd Minor Oil- seeds			
		<i>mil acres</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>mil acres</i>				
Corn	82.9	63.6	76.7	4.8	2.5	.1	2.6	-2.6
Sorghum	13.5	10.4	77.2	.8	1.5	.01	1.5	-.5
Barley	11.5	8.7	75.9	.7	1.3	.1	1.5	- .5
Oats	7.3	2.8	38.2	.0	.5	.04	.5	- .3
Feed Grains	115.2	85.5	74.3	6.2	5.9	.3	6.2	-3.9
Wheat ³	79.3	67.6	85.2	10.1	5.1	.3	5.3	-1.7
Upland Cotton	14.6	12.3	84.2	.6	.3	N/A	.3	.2
ELS Cotton	.2	.03	12.0	.001	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rice	4.2	4.0	95.3	.2	.5	N/A	.5	- .4
Total	213.5	169.4	79.3	17.1	11.7	.5	12.3	-5.7

NOTE: Figures may not add due to rounding

¹ Acreage Conservation Reserve

² Normal flex acreage and optional flex acreage planted to another crop.

³ Enrolled base includes 36.3 million acres of “Winter Wheat Option.”

Producers who participate in the 1991 commodity programs agree to reduce their plantings from the established crop acreage bases by at least 15 percent for wheat; 7.5 percent for corn, sorghum and barley; and 5 percent for rice, upland and ELS cotton. Acreage reduction was not required for oats.

Producers have the option to plant permitted crops other than the program crop on up to 25 percent of any participating program crop acreage base without suffering a reduction in the size of the base. This acreage is known as “flex” acreage.

The permitted crops that may be planted on flex acreage are all crops except fruits and vegetables (not including fruits and vegetables used for

green manure, haying and grazing and adzuki, faba and lupin beans), peanuts, tobacco, wild rice, trees and nuts.

Producers intend to plant 4.2 million acres of flex acreage to soybeans, 0.4 million to minor oilseeds and 1.0 million acres to other crops.

NATIONAL SUMMARY OF 1991 FLEXIBLE ACREAGE

Crop	Soybeans	Minor Oilseeds	Other Crops	Total
- - - - - Million Acres - - - - -				
Corn	2.376	.064	.259	2.699
Sorghum	.308	.018	.082	.408
Barley	.210	.067	.136	.413
Oats	.081	.018	.038	.137
Feed Grains	2.976	.168	.515	3.659
Wheat	.826	.210	.389	1.425
Upland Cotton	.171	.016	.055	.242
Rice	.246	.009	.060	.315
Total	4.219	.403	1.019	5.642

Participating producers are eligible for program benefits such as price support loans and deficiency payments. Also, producers could request that 40 percent of their projected deficiency payments be paid in advance. These payments are made in cash.

A complete copy of the tables can be obtained by writing to USDA, OPA-News Division, Room 404-A, Washington, D.C. 20250, ask for press release 0795-91 or by calling (202) 447-4026.

Robert Feist (202) 447-6789

#

RIVER SPRINGS COOPERATIVE PAYS \$5,000 TO SETTLE USGSA VIOLATION CHARGES

WASHINGTON, Aug. 14—River Springs Cooperative, of Green Springs, Ohio, this week paid a \$5,000 civil penalty to settle a charge by the U.S. Department of Agriculture that the company caused the issuance of false and incorrect official grain inspection certificates.

John C. Foltz, administrator of the USDA's Federal Grain Inspection Service, said the cooperative influenced an official sampler to use grain drawn by elevator personnel as official samples. This action, a direct violation of proper procedures, resulted in the issuance of official grain inspection certificates containing false and incorrect information.

Under terms of an administrative law order signed July 10, River Springs Cooperative agreed to the fine, but neither admitted nor denied the charge.

FGIS investigated the cooperative and filed the charge under authority of the United States Grain Standards Act, which provides for the establishment of U.S. grain standards, and for an official inspection and weighing system for grain shipped in interstate and foreign commerce.

Dana Stewart (202) 447-5091

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U.S., AUSTRALIAN OFFICIALS CONCLUDE DAY OF TALKS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 14—Officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade met here today to discuss bilateral trade issues of mutual interest.

The U.S. delegation was led by F. Paul Dickerson, general sales manager of USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. The Australian delegation was led by Greg Wood, first assistant secretary, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Topics discussed included the international grain situation and outlook; the international market situation for wheat, rice and barley; and discussion of both countries' efforts to achieve a successful conclusion to the Uruguay Round of negotiations of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Both countries affirmed that a successful conclusion is vital to agricultural producers in the United States and Australia.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

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